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FOR

PAS

PROGRAM

News

STATION WTOP Radio

DATE

June 23, 1982 6:30 P.M.

CITY

Washington, D.C.

SUBJECT

Protection for U.S. Spies

PAM COULTER: Calling America's undercover agents heroes in a grim struggle, President Reagan signed a bill into law today that makes U.S. spies' identities a secret, punishable by law if revealed.

Kitty Falcone has more.

KITTY FALCONE: As hundreds of CIA employees watched under the sunny skies outside their headquarters building in Langley, Virginia, President Reagan signed into law a bill surrounded by controversy. It forbids the publication of the names of American spies, even if those names are part of the public record.

The American Civil Liberties Union has called the law a clear violation of the First Amendment and has offered legal help to anyone who wants to challenge it. But President Reagan brushed aside such criticism in his remarks at the signing ceremony.

PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN: This carefully-drawn act recognizes that the revelation of the names of secret agents adds nothing to legitimate public debate over intelligence policy.

FALCONE: Mr. Reagan said the law sends a message to the world that the U.S. is willing to protect its own security.

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